DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 387 285 RC 020 230

AUTHOR Trueba, Henry T.
TITLE From Failure to Success: The Roles of Culture and Cultural Conflict in the Academic Achievement of Chicano Students. Chapter 6.
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 15p.; In: Chicano School Failure and Success: Research and Policy Agendas for the 1990s; see RC 020 224.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Cognitive Development; Cultural Context; *Cultural Differences; *Culturally Relevant Education; Culture Conflict; Educational Anthropology; *Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; *Hispanic American Culture; Literacy Education; *Mexican American Education; Mexican Americans; Minority Groups; School Holding Power; Student Motivation
IDENTIFIERS *Chicanos; Cultural Values; Hispanic American Students; Student Empowerment

ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses current theories in educational anthropology that attempt to explain Chicano low academic achievement and changes in achievement as a result of successful educational interventions. Educational researchers have not been able to present adequate justification for the differential achievement levels of minorities. Recent studies of English literacy acquisition analyzing the use of culturally and linguistically congruent instructional approaches reveal the intimate relationship of language and culture to the school adjustment of minority students. In addition, research indicates strong relationships between culture and both cognitive development and literacy acquisition. The South San Diego Writing Project illustrates some difficulties in creating culturally congruent literacy activities in the school setting and their successful outcomes. This project collected ethnographic data over a 4-year period in the San Diego South Bay area along the U.S.-Mexican border. The intent was to explore more effective ways of teaching Chicano youth how to write in English. Classes were organized into small groups, and these work teams took full control of their writing activities. Results of the study suggest that the writing groups empowered Chicano students within the school environment and offered them a unique opportunity to express their collective feelings and to reinforce cultural values acquired in the home. Research of this nature demonstrates that culture is closely related to the acquisition of knowledge and to motivation to achieve, both at the social level (as it affects the family, school, and society) and at the personal level. In addition, students' perception of school activities as enhancing cultural goals and values acquired in the home can be instrumental in converting failure into success. Implications for literacy and dropout research are discussed. Contains 54 references. (LP)

ED 387 285

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E. STREISAND
(FALMER PRESS)

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

RC020230

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Chapter 6

From Failure to Success: The Roles of Culture and Cultural Conflict in the Academic Achievement of Chicano Students

Henry T. Trueba

The emphasis on minority school failure has been pervasive in the educational research literature. The theoretical approaches employed in order to make sense of apparent low achievement of some linguistic minority students attempt to persuade readers that there is something fundamentally wrong with minority cultures, and that there is nothing one can do to change it.

This chapter discusses current theories in educational anthropology attempting to explain Chicano low academic achievement and its change achievement as a result of successful educational interventions. I present first a theoretical discussion of our current thinking on minority achievement and culture, and then offer an interdisciplinary approach to the study of literacy development for Chicano students. Second, I describe the Southern San Diego Bay area literacy project. As other previous studies (Spindler and Spindler, 1987a, 1987b; Trueba, 1989a, Trueba and Delgado-Gaitan, 1988), this project had important implications for applied research because of its empowering effect on minority students.

Achievement Theories in Anthropology

The continuous arrival of new Hispanic immigrants over the last four decades, resulting from war-torn Central America and poverty in Mexico and Latin America, contributes to create an impression of permanence and stagnation in the state of poverty and isolation of Hispanic groups. There does not seem to be an adequate way of measuring upward mobility of Hispanic individuals, though some serious attempts have been made (McCarthy and Burciaga Valdes, 1985, 1986). Government reports on the socioeconomic conditions and school achievement of Hispanics reinforce negative attitudes about Hispanic populations.

According to the US Department of Commerce:

— The Hispanic civilian noninstitutional population increased by 4.3 million (or 30 per cent) from 1980 to 1987.
— The educational attainment of Hispanics has improved since 1982, but lags behind that of non-Hispanics.
— Hispanic men and women continue to earn less than non-Hispanics.
— Hispanic families continue to have less total money income than non-Hispanic families.
— The poverty rate of Spanish-origin families in 1986 was almost three times as high as that of non-Hispanic families.
— The poverty rate for Hispanic families has not changed significantly between 1981 and 1986, but because of population growth, the number of Hispanic families below the poverty level in 1986 was 24 per cent higher than that in 1981 (US Department of Commerce, 1987, p. 1).

Culture and School Failure

Educational researchers have not been able to present adequate justification for the differential achievement levels of minorities. Some have presented controversial theories pinpointing genetic (Dunn, 1987; Jensen, 1981) or cultural ecological arguments (Ogbu, 1978, 1987a, 1987b) to explain low achievement. Attempts have been made to analyze these explanations (Trueba, 1987a, 1988b, 1988c) and consider their application to teacher education (Trueba, 1989a).

Culture plays a similar role in both successful learning and the 'social accomplishment' of academic failure and minority alienation is very similar (Florio-Ruane, 1988). Culture provides the motivation to achieve either success or failure. That is particularly true of the ultimate failure of dropping out and rejecting educational institutions and their knowledge, norms and values. How is this possible? Why is there such a conflict of cultural values? The explanation must be found within the larger sociocultural, historical and political contexts of the minority participation in mainstream social institutions. The indiscriminate use and application of minority group taxonomies (designations of caste-like, autonomous, and immigrant types) by cultural ecologists for entire ethnic or minority groups may have objectionable theoretical and practical consequences (Trueba, 1988b). These taxonomies are based on theories of differential school achievement which do not allow for either individual or collective change in status, and therefore they tend to stereotype entire ethnic groups. Furthermore, these theories do not explain the conversion of failure into success among 'caste-like' minorities described as follows:

> *Castelike* or *involuntary minorities* are people who were *originally brought into United States society involuntarily* through slavery, conquest, or colonization. Thereafter, these minorities were relegated to menial positions and denied true assimilation into mainstream society. American Indians, black Americans, and Native Hawaiians are examples. In the case of Mexican Americans, those who later immigrated from Mexico were assigned the status of the original conquered group in the southwestern United States, with whom they came to share a sense of

> peoplehood or collective identity. (Ogbu, 1987b, p. 321; emphasis in original)

For example, the task of empirically documenting that all or most Mexican Americans were colonized or entered this country involuntarily, or that they have been denied true assimilation into mainstream America is enormous. There is abundant evidence of fairly rapid assimilation of many, while many more continue to arrive of their own free will seeking economic and educational opportunities. Thus, while we can seek in the home culture an explanation for the response of a minority to the academic demands placed by school and society, we must search for explanations that do not stereotype minorities or preempt our search. An interdisciplinary approach — as seen in this book — may be one solution.

Failure to learn may be better understood as related to communication skills which develop in the context of culturally congruent and meaningful social exchanges. It is not an individual failure; it is a failure of the sociocultural system that denies a child the opportunity for meaningful social intercourse, and thus for cognitive development. As such, academic failure is fully understandable only in its macro-historical, social, economic and political contexts (see Pearl, this volume). Failure in learning is not caused by a single social institution, such as the school or the family (Cole and Griffin, 1983).

Both academic success and academic failure are socially constructed phenomena. Failure to learn is a consequence of a given sociocultural system:

> Working within pre-existing social norms and role relationships, teachers and students collaborate to create the linguistic and social conditions under which students fail to learn ... Misunderstandings of one another at that time can lead to assessment of students as less than able or interested learners. (Florio-Ruane, 1988, p. 1)

The acquisition of academic knowledge is not necessarily any more difficult than the acquisition of the concrete knowledge required for effective everyday social interaction. Thus, some researchers believe that resistance to learning should be viewed as students' rejection of cultural values and academic demands placed on them by school personnel. For example, Erickson (1984) discussed resistance to academic achievement on the part of alienated students in cultural transition.

Recent studies on English literacy acquisition have analyzed the use of culturally and linguistically congruent instructional approaches that smooth the transition from the home to the school learning environment (e.g., Au and Jordan, 1981; Tharp and Gallimore, 1989, in the Kamehameha Schools of Hawaii and Southern California; Delgado-Gaitan, 1987a, 1987b, with Mexican children in Northern and Central California; and Trueba, 1989a, with Hispanic and Indo-Chinese). In contrast, other studies have shown the consequences of the use of approaches which are culturally incongruent or meaningless (e.g., Richards, 1987, among the Mayan children of Guatemala; Hornberger, 1988, among the Quechua children of Peru; Macias, 1987, among the Papago; and Deyhle, 1987, among the Navajo). What is significant about these studies is that they show the intimate relationship between language and culture in the adjustment of minority students in the schools.

George and Louise Spindler (1982), who have consistently viewed education as a phenomenon of cultural transmission — implying the inculcation of specific values — have recently called our attention to educators' need for *reflective cultural analysis* in order to take into account unconscious biases and cultural ethnocentrism.

In the tradition of the Spindlers' cross-cultural comparisons (1982, 1987a), Fujita and Sano (1988) have compared and contrasted American and Japanese day-care centers, using the Spindlers' reflective cross-cultural interview technique. They elicited and analyzed videotapes of Japanese and American teachers; then they asked one group of teachers to interpret the behaviors of the other group. This study has permitted us to reflect on the ethnocentrism and projection of cultural values reflected in day-care activities; that is, socialization for 'independence' or for 'nurturing tolerance and cooperation' characterizing', respectively; American and Japanese teachers. Another approach in looking at academic socialization for achievement has been the one taken by Borish (1988) who uses the Spindlers' model of 'compression and decompression' cycles. He focuses on the socialization of high school kibbutz young adults getting ready to enter the armed forces who endure intense labor experiences 'in the winter of their discontent'.

DeVos (1973, 1982, 1983; DeVos and Wagatsuma, 1966), for example, has used projective techniques in combination with ethnographic methods to penetrate complex layers of personality structure and motivational processes. Suarez-Orozco (1987, in press), using cultural ecological approaches and projective techniques shows that the success of Central American refugee children is based on a motivation to achieve. This motivation is an expression of their profound commitment to assist and make proud their parents or family members left behind in war-torn Central America. These research methods have been applied at the broader macro-sociological, political and historical levels, as well as at the micro-structural levels of interaction (Ogbu, 1978, 1987a, 1987b; Suarez-Orozco, 1987, in press).

Culture and Cognitive Development

Soviet psychologists led by Vygotsky (1962, 1978), and Neo-Vygotskians (see references in Wertsch, 1985; and in Tharp and Gallimore, 1989) have provided us with forceful arguments for linking the development of higher mental functions to social activities. Vygotsky viewed language as crucial for the development of thinking skills, and language control as a measure of mental development. His emphasis on the learner's role in determining his/her area of most possible cognitive development (or 'zone of proximal development') is related to the role that culture plays in communication during learning activities. Wertsch's position (1987) is that culture is instrumental in the selection and use of specific communicative strategies in adult-child interaction, as well as in the organization of cognitive tasks.

Wertsch (1987) indicates that 'people privilege the use of one mediational means over others' and that 'we need to combine the analysis of collectively organized mediational means with the analysis of interpsychological functioning'. Consequently, if 'choice of mediational means is a major determinant of how

thinking and speaking can proceed, then processes whereby groups make decisions (either implicitly or explicitly) about these means should become a focus of our research' (Wertsch, 1987, pp. 20–1). In brief, according to Wertsch, culture either determines or at least it facilitates a conscious, collective choice of communicative strategies. Thus, if we want to study memory, thinking, attention, or other facets of human consciousness 'we must begin by recognizing the sociohistorical and cultural embeddedness of the subjects as well as investigators involved' (1987, pp. 21–2).

Within this theoretical framework, symbolic systems are presumed to mediate between the mind and outside reality, and the development of the higher psychological functions is a necessary condition for school achievement. That reality, however, is determined by cultural knowledge transferred from one generation to another and by universal psychological principles which go beyond the individual. Furthermore, both linguistic and social skills are viewed as developing within the microsociological units in which children grow, such as the family, school and the peer groups.

Culture and Literacy

One can argue that effective English literacy instruction requires the transmission of cultural values and skills as much as the academic knowledge associated with mainstream American culture (Spindler and Spindler, 1982, 1987b). The work by Gumperz and Hymes (1964), Gumperz (1982, 1986), and Cook-Gumperz (1986), has forced us to reconceptualize the interrelationships between communication, literacy, and culture that form a single symbolic system used in adapting to new cultural contexts and changing with the cumulative experiences in people's lives. As such, literacy is seen as a 'socially constructed phenomenon' (Cook-Gumperz, 1986, p. 1) consisting-of culture-specific symbols developed for communicative purposes. As such, literacy depends on the economic and political institutions determining power hierarchies and access to resources; technological, industrial and military complexes not only depend on overall levels of literacy in a given society, but they also determine the quality of instruction in schools and the nature of curriculum.

According to Goodenough, culture 'is made up of the concepts, beliefs, and principles of action and organization' that a researcher finds enacted in the daily experiences of the members of that society (1976, p. 5). However, as Frake points out, the problem is not 'to state what someone did but to specify the conditions under which it is culturally appropriate to anticipate that he, or persons occupying his role, will render an equivalent performance' (1964, p. 112).

It follows, therefore, that a good understanding of a culture requires a good theory predictive of behavior in a particular social setting. In other words, cultural knowledge and cultural values are at the basis of reasoning, inferencing and interpreting meanings. There is an important distinction between cultural knowledge and cultural values in the acquisition of literacy skills. The task is to make sense of text as a message whose content takes meaning within the 'concepts, beliefs and principles of action' alluded to by Goodenough (1976). To accomplish this task we must have knowledge of the codes of behavior (the

cognitive dimensions of culture), but also we must share in the cultural values (the normative dimensions of culture) which invite us to engage in communication through text.

In order to see the culture-specific cognitive and normative dimensions operating in the literacy activities of Chicano and other minority students it is necessary to observe such literacy activities systematically and not exclusively in the constrained school settings, but also at home (Delgado-Gaitan, 1989). The following discussion of a research project will help to illustrate the difficulties in creating culturally congruent literacy activities in the school setting, and the advantages of an interdisciplinary research approach.

The South San Diego Writing Project

This project consisted of ethnographic data collected over a period of four years (1980–84) in the San Diego South Bay area along the US-Mexican border (Trueba, 1984, 1987b; Trueba, Moll, Diaz and Diaz, 1984). The intent was to explore more effective ways of teaching Chicano youth how to write in English. The two high schools selected for the study had a 45 per cent Chicano population and the lowest academic scores in the school district.

High school Chicano students were not only socially isolated in the community and minimally exposed to English-speaking peers, but they were also economically isolated in barrios where violence and other gang activities frequently occurred. As we gathered the twelve volunteer teachers who wanted to work in our project, we found out that most of them lived away from the community in which they taught. All were eager to become effective writing instructors and teachers, but most of them felt that students were so unprepared and ignorant that the teacher alone was doomed to fail. Only three of the twelve teachers knew Spanish well.

The objectives of this applied research project, discussed with parents and teachers during an orientation, were to 1) improve the student's quantity and quality of English compositions, 2) encourage student participation and cooperation in writing activities, and 3) analyze in detail student response to English writing instruction. The specific demographic, socioeconomic and political characteristics of the barrio, as well as the home language and culture of the students, were generally unknown and viewed as irrelevant by teachers. Given the history of low academic performance of Chicano youth in the local schools, teachers felt that students could not succeed in learning how to write in English. Researchers arranged for parents and teachers to meet and become acquainted with each other's culture.

Teachers were asked to organize their classrooms into small groups that eventually became cohesive work teams with full control of their own writing activities. They would explore possible topics, research them, develop data-gathering instruments such as surveys and interview protocols, conduct actual interviews with peers and adults, discuss findings and finally write cooperatively extended and complex essays. The Chicano students discovered that writing was no longer a futile school exercise designed by teachers for their own purposes, but a meaningful activity and a means for exchanging important ideas with specific audiences and for expressing their own feelings.

Students finally realized that their individual and collective voices can make a difference in public opinion and in the quality of life at school. Thus, Chicano high school students not only significantly sharpened their communicative skills but realized that these skills are a powerful instrument in voicing individual and collective concerns. Teachers would often express their surprise: 'I am impressed. Look!' they said as they shared their students' compositions. A teacher wrote in her diary: 'This [the unexpected high performance of students] was a very successful lesson for me in many ways. It furthers my belief that if what is taught is important in the mind of the learner, much more will truly be learned' (Trueba *et al.*, 1984, p. 131).

Analytical Reflections

The analysis of the project was limited to a theoretical discussion of Vygotsky's cognitive development in the context of writing curriculum, without attempting to account for the psychosocial factors that generated the strong motivation leading to high achievement and literacy levels. The importance of the peer group as a working unit providing moral support during the learning process, especially for young Chicanos undergoing rapid changes at home, would have required more systematic study of the Mexican families' cultural knowledge and values, as well as the processes of integration of school knowledge and values.

Writing gradually became easier and more rewarding to students. Teachers and researchers learned more about students' home life and their aspirations through the English compositions. Then, we celebrated our success and enthusiastically assumed the role of 'experts' on writing focusing on technical matters. As one teacher noticed: 'The more controversial and relevant they make the topic, the more willing the students are to unite and write well. The more complicated the assignment is, the better the responses' (Trueba, 1987b, p. 246). In our analysis we forgot an important psychological principle advanced by anthropologists; that in order to understand motivation behind expressed values, 'one must deal with the universal emotions of love, fear, and hate' and that 'culture, from one psychological viewpoint, is a mode of expressing, in all their complexity, these primary emotions, which are aroused by inner biological urges or occur as reactions to specific outer stimuli' (DeVos, 1973, p. 63).

It has taken several years to realize that it is precisely in young Chicanos' need to express their feelings of love, hate and fear that their motivation to write began to develop. More importantly, this need was most appropriately met within the peer group, because cooperation and team work is culturally the preferred mode of academic activity for Mexican-origin youth. Writing groups offered Chicano students a unique opportunity to express both their collective feelings and to reinforce a cultural value acquired in the home. Furthermore, there was a positive side-effect: high academic performance in an English writing class impacted positively their overall performance in school, thus stimulating student motivation to produce better English compositions.

In the end, writing became a vehicle for restoring the credibility Chicanos lacked among other students, and, further, a means for gaining political representation in the school. Violence or other gang activities, low-riding and other conspicuous activities of 'cholos' or 'vatos locos' which had been the common

expressions of Chicano youth power, were effectively replaced by writing as a legitimate expression of power. This was not done by brute force power, but of intellectual power to function within the existing social institutions. Here is the essence of empowerment in a democratic society.

Mexican and Mexican American families often find themselves isolated from mainstream society, yet they must face drastic changes in a new world whose language and culture is not understandable to them. Children growing up in these families are subject to high levels of anxiety related to their status as 'illegal aliens' in extreme poverty and their inability to communicate in English with mainstream society. The dramatic change from failure to success in acquiring English literacy cannot be explained in terms of 'caste-like' concepts and cultural ecological theory that would have predicted permanent failure of these students (Ogbu, 1978, 1987a, 1987b).

The explanation for the unexpected academic success of 'vatos locos' rests on their newly discovered meaning of English literacy activities if used for purposes of genuine communication and political representation within the social institutions in which they live, particularly within the school. It was indeed a discovery for the researchers and teachers as well. Writing can become a powerful instrument in the hands of students precisely because it gives them a voice in an academic world in which they have little control of their lives. The recognition, status and personal satisfaction embedded in the ability to communicate well through writing were a joint accomplishment of students, teachers and researchers all working together within the political arena of school achievement. This is how the internal rewards for English literacy acquisition function. The journey from failure to success should help us understand the social construction of failure. The next section examines an aspect of the social construction of the dropout, the ultimate academic failure.

Action Research and Empowerment

The conversion of failure into success is empirically demonstrable, whether we can explain it theoretically or not. Unfortunately, it is a rare fact. However, it is important to revise not only the theories of failure and success, but their very components, especially the concepts created by academicians and imposed on students. The concept of 'dropout' is particularly inadequate because it misrepresents the social reality of students' school experience.

The literature does not distinguish the diverse types of dropouts, nor their views of school and reasons for abandoning school within the context of their home culture. Ethnographic fieldwork among dropouts, however, seems to indicate that minority students distinguish clearly different types of dropouts. A study conducted in the San Joaquin Valley (Trueba, 1988a) suggests that Chicano students make conscious and deliberate decisions to withdraw permanently from school for reasons beyond their control (e.g., relocation of family, economic need, personal safety, etc.). These students are referred to as 'discontinuers' in contrast to those pressured to leave school against their will who are called 'pushedouts'. In general, both discontinuers and pushedouts tend to leave school permanently and are presumed by educators to be deprived of the economic opportunities given to individuals with higher educational levels. We do not have

BEST CO

good studies of the actual outcomes. We know that some of the discontinuers are doing well economically and plan to return to school later on. There is a profound difference between pushedouts and discontinuers with regard to their degree of alienation and their views of school. The cycles of alienation, marginality, and illiteracy for some minority students are clearly related to their experience and interpretation of cultural conflict within the school, which are also guided by parental perceptions of schools (Wilson, 1989).

Culture is closely related to the acquisition of knowledge and motivation to achieve, both at the social level (as it affects the family, school and society), as well as at the personal level (as it affects the structure of participation in learning events within specific contexts). The role of culture in students' perception of school activities as enhancing cultural goals and values acquired in the home is instrumental in converting failure into success. But students' cultural perceptions of school as oppressive and destructive of the home culture can have devastating effects (Wilson, 1989). Therefore, culture must be recognized by researchers as a key factor in the study of Chicano achievement.

Implications for Literacy and Dropout Research

What should be the focus of dropout research? Where and how should we explore the role of culture in literacy and dropout phenomena? What is the expected impact of such research? Researchers are often overwhelmed with these questions and opt for a detached and safe position; they become 'pure researchers' and reject applied research as unscientific. Others explore intervention-oriented research convinced that science can also grow from the study of interventions. The work of many anthropologists and psychologists suggests that intervention and explanatory research are complementary and that the dichotomy between basic and applied research was the result of a political and historical accident more than the logical distribution of research activities (Trueba, 1988a).

Applied and basic research must be conducted in both formal and informal learning settings where students manipulate symbolic systems within their sociocultural environment. The immediate as well as the broader contexts of academic activities in specific learning settings must be studied. They are essential in understanding the organization of behavior and the type of student participation in learning activities. The analysis of literacy activities, for example, and the patterns of student participation should lead us to a more comprehensive view of the 'cultural embeddedness' of Chicano dropout and alienation problems. Teacher's knowledge of the home language and culture of Chicanos can be highly instrumental in understanding any communication gaps between the parents or students and school personnel. The school cultural environment and the organization of classroom work should reflect sensitivity to the ethnic cultures of minority students and this way maximize their participation in learning activities. Chicano and other minority children can generate their own text materials based on their home experiences as a bridge to engaging in the school culture (Trueba, 1989b). The analysis of learning activities in the home is most important because there inquiry strategies, logical inferencing and cultural congruence occur naturally (see studies by Delgado-Gaitan, 1987a, 1987b, 1989). This analysis can provide insights into possible linkages between self-empowerment efforts on

Y AVAILABLE

the part of Chicano students and their parents and the role of school personnel in such empowerment through literacy activities.

Concluding Thoughts

Several years ago, Erickson (1982) called our attention to the need for interdisciplinary approaches to the study of learning:

> Individual cognitive functioning has been largely the purview of cognitive psychologists who have often attempted to study thinking apart from the naturally occurring social and cultural circumstances. The anthropology of education often has studied *anything but* deliberately taught cognitive learning. Clearly, some rapprochement is needed, from the direction of the (more cognitively sophisticated) psychology of learning to the (more contextually sophisticated) anthropology of learning. (p. 173)

Empowerment research has developed in the last five years through the integration of cultural anthropology and the Vygotskian school of psychology. Interdisciplinary research on dropouts can become a powerful tool in the implementation of educational reform provided it reflects genuine concern for the culture of minorities. Researchers' understanding of the role of culture in converting minority failure into success is constituted by the following ingredients:

1. Compassion for Chicano and other linguistic minority children who are not responsible for their academic predicament and their struggles in adjusting to a new cultural and linguistic environment.
2. Commitment to the principles of educational equity, particularly to that of respect for the home language and culture of linguistic minority children.
3. Theoretical flexibility and persistence in the pursuit of the elusive role of culture in both the acquisition of knowledge and values both in school and away from school.

We find ourselves at an educational crossroad of research approaches on Chicano achievement. Anthropology and psychology can offer important contributions to educational reform, but only if researchers can internalize pedagogical principles capitalizing on children's culture and language. The approaches are an example of action research whose ultimate purpose is to enhance our understanding of democratic empowerment processes through learning, as a means to understand American democracy and to share in the American dream. Isn't this precisely what thousands of immigrants seek as they face the dangers and tribulations in crossing our borders?

References

Au, K.H. and Jordan, C. (1981) 'Teaching reading to Hawaiian children: Finding a culturally appropriate solution', in H. Trueba, G. Guthrie and K. Au (Eds) *Culture and the Bilingual Classroom: Studies in Classroom Ethnography*, Rowley, MA, Newbury House, pp. 139–52.

BORISH, S. (1988) 'The winter of their discontent: Cultural compression and decompression in the life cycle of the kibbutz adolescent', in H. TRUEBA and C. DELGADO-GAITAN (Eds) *School and Society: Teaching Content Through Culture*, New York, Praeger, pp. 181–99.

COLE, M. and GRIFFIN, P. (1983) A socio-historical approach to remediation, *The Quarterly Newsletter of the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition*, **5**, pp. 69–74.

COOK-GUMPERZ, J. (Ed.) (1986) *The Social Construction of Literacy*, Cambridge, MA, Cambridge University Press.

DELGADO-GAITAN, C. (1987a) 'Parent perceptions of school: Supportive environments for children', in H. TRUEBA (Ed.) *Success or Failure?: Learning and the Language Minority Student*, Cambridge, MA, Newbury House, pp. 131–55.

DELGADO-GAITAN, C. (1987b) 'Traditions and transitions in the learning process of Mexican children: An ethnographic view', in G. SPINDLER and L. SPINDLER (Eds) *Interpretive Ethnography of Education: At Home and Abroad*, Hillsdale, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 333–59.

DELGADO-GAITAN, C. (1989) 'Literacy for Empowerment: Role of Mexican Parents in Their Children's Education', unpublished manuscript, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Santa Barbara.

DEVOS, G. (1973) 'Japan's outcastes: The problem of the Burakumin', in B. WHITAKER (Ed.) *The Fourth World: Victims of Group Oppression*, New York, Schocken Books, pp. 307–27.

DEVOS, G. (1982) 'Adaptive strategies in US minorities', in E. JONES and S.J. KORCHIN (Eds) *Minority Mental Health*, New York, Praeger, pp. 74–117.

DEVOS, G. (1983) 'Ethnic identity and minority status: Some psycho-cultural considerations', in A. JACOBSON-WIDDING (Ed.) *Identity: Personal and Socio-Cultural*, Uppsala, Almquist and Wiksell Tryckeri AB, pp. 135–58.

DEVOS, G. and WAGATSUMA, H. (1966) *Japan's Invisible Race: Caste in Culture and Personality*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press.

DEYHLE, D. (1987) 'Learning failure: Tests as gatekeepers and the culturally different child', in H. TRUEBA (Ed.) *Success or Failure?: Learning and the Language Minority Student*, NY, Newbury Publishers, pp. 85–108.

DUNN, L.M. (1987) *Bilingual Hispanic Children on the US Mainland: A Review of Research on Their Cognitive, Linguistic, and Scholastic Development*, Circle Pines, MN, American Guidance Service.

ERICKSON, F. (1982) 'Taught cognitive learning in its immediate environments: A neglected topic in the anthropology of education', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, **13**, pp. 149–80.

ERICKSON, F. (1984) 'School literacy, reasoning, and civility: An anthropologist's perspective', *Review of Educational Research*, **54**, pp. 525–44.

FLORIO-RUANE, S. (1988) 'The Relation of Family, Community, and Schooling in Tomorrow's Schools', unpublished manuscript, Holmes Group, Michigan State University, East Lansing.

FRAKE, C.O. (1964) 'A structural description of Subanum "religious behavior"', in W.H. GOODENOUGH (Ed.) *Explorations in Cultural Anthropology*, New York, McGraw-Hill.

FUJITA, M. and SANO, T. (1988) 'Children in American and Japanese day-care centers: Ethnography and reflective cross-cultural interviewing', in H. TRUEBA and C. DELGADO-GAITAN (Eds) *School and Society: Teaching Content Through Culture*, New York, Praeger, pp. 73–97.

GOODENOUGH, W.H. (1976) 'Multiculturalism as the normal human experience', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, **7**, pp. 4–7.

GUMPERZ, J. (Ed.) (1982) *Language and Social Identity*, Cambridge, MA, Cambridge University Press.

GUMPERZ, J. (1986) 'International Sociolinguistics in the study of schooling', in J. COOK-

GUMPERZ (Ed.) *The Social Construction of Literacy*, Cambridge, MA, Cambridge University Press, pp. 45–68.

GUMPERZ, J. and HYMES, D. (Eds) (1964) 'The ethnography of communication', *American Anthropologist*, **66**.

HORNBERGER, N. (1988) 'Iman Chay?: Quechua children in Peru's schools', in H. TRUEBA and C. DELGADO-GAITAN (Eds) *School and Society: Teaching Content Through Culture*, New York, Praeger, pp. 99–117.

JENSEN, A.R. (1981) *Straight Talk about Mental Tests*, New York, The Free Press.

MCCARTHY, K.F. and BURCIAGA VALDEZ, R. (1985) *Current and Future Effects of Mexican Immigration in California: Executive Summary*, The Rand Corporation Series (R-3365/1-CR), Santa Monica, CA, Rand Corporation.

MCCARTHY, K.F. and BURCIAGA VALDEZ, R. (1986) *Current and Future Effects of Mexican Immigration in California*, The Rand Corporation Series R-3365-CR, Santa Monica, CA, Rand Corporation.

MACIAS, J. (1987) 'The hidden curriculum of Papago teachers: American Indian strategies for mitigating cultural discontinuity in early schooling', in G. SPINDLER and L. SPINDLER (Eds) *The Interpretive Ethnography of Education: At Home and Abroad*, Hillsdale, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 363–80.

MEHAN, H. (1979) *Learning Lessons*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

OGBU, J. (1978) *Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, New York, Academic Press.

OGBU, J. (1987a) 'Variability in minority responses to schooling: Nonimmigrants vs. immigrants', in G. SPINDLER and L. SPINDLER (Eds) *The Interpretive Ethnography of Education: At Home and Abroad*, Hillsdale, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 255–78.

OGBU, J. (1987b) 'Variability in minority school performance: A problem in search of an explanation', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, **18**, pp. 312–34.

RICHARDS, J. (1987) 'Learning Spanish and classroom dynamics: School failure in a Guatemalan Maya community', in H. TRUEBA (Ed.) *Success or Failure?: Learning and the Language Minority Student*, New York, Newbury Publishers, pp. 109–30.

SPINDLER, G. and SPINDLER, L. (1982) 'Roger Harker and Schonhausen: From the familiar to the strange and back again', in G. SPINDLER (Ed.) *Doing the Ethnography of Schooling*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

SPINDLER, G. and SPINDLER, L. (1987a) 'Teaching and learning how to do the ethnography of education', in G. SPINDLER and L. SPINDLER (Eds) *The Interpretive Ethnography of Education: At Home and Abroad*, Hillsdale, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum, pp. 17–33.

SPINDLER, G. and SPINDLER, L. (1987b) 'Cultural dialogue and schooling in Schoenhausen and Roseville: A comparative analysis', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, **18**, pp. 3–16.

SUAREZ-OROZCO, M. (1987) 'Towards a psychosocial understanding of Hispanic adaptation to American schooling', in H. TRUEBA (Ed.) *Success or Failure: Learning and the Language Minority Student*, New York, Newbury Publishers, pp. 156–68.

SUAREZ-OROZCO, M. (in press) *In Pursuit of a Dream: New Hispanic Immigrants in American Schools*, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press.

THARP, R. and GALLIMORE, R. (1989) *Rousing Minds to Life: Teaching, Learning and Schooling in Social Context*, Cambridge, MA, Cambridge University Press.

TRUEBA, H.T. (1984) 'The forms, functions and values of literacy: Reading for survival in a barrio as a student', *Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education* **9**, pp. 21–38.

TRUEBA, H. (Ed.) (1987a) *Success or Failure?: Learning and the Language Minority Student*, New York, Newbury Publishers.

TRUEBA, H. (1987b) 'Organizing classroom instruction in specific sociocultural contexts: Teaching Mexican youth to write in English', in S. GOLDMAN and H. TRUEBA (Eds) *Becoming Literate in English as a Second Language: Advances in Research and Theory*, Norwood, NJ, Ablex, pp. 235–52.

TRUEBA, H. (1988a) 'Peer socialization among minority students: A high school dropout prevention program', in H. TRUEBA and C. DELGADO-GAITAN (Eds) *School and Society: Learning Content Through Culture*, New York, Praeger, pp. 201–17.

TRUEBA, H. (1988b) 'Culturally-based explanations of minority students' academic achievement', *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* **19**, pp. 270–87.

TRUEBA, H. (1988c) 'English literacy acquisition: From cultural trauma to learning disabilities in minority students', *Journal of Linguistics and Education*, **1**, pp. 125–52.

TRUEBA, H. (1989a) *Raising Silent Voices: Educating the Linguistic Minorities for the 21st Century*, New York, Harper and Row.

TRUEBA, H. (1989b) 'Report on the Multicultural Bilingual Special Education Program of California State University, Bakersfield', unpublished manuscript, Office for Research on Educational Equity, University of California, Santa Barbara.

TRUEBA, H. and DELGADO-GAITAN, C. (Eds) (1988) *School and Society: Learning Content Through Culture*, New York, Praeger.

TRUEBA, H., MOLL, L., DIAZ, S. and DIAZ, R. (1984) *Improving the Functional Writing of Bilingual Secondary School Students* (Contract No. 400-81-0023), Washington, DC, National Institute of Education, ERIC, Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, No. ED 240 862.

US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (1987) *The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1986 and 1987 (Advance Report)*, Washington, DC, Government Printing Office.

VYGOTSKY, L.S. (1962) *Thought and Language*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.

VYGOTSKY, L.S. (1978) *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, M. COLE, V. JOHN-TEINER, S. SCRIBNER and E. SOUBERMAN (Eds), Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

WERTSCH, J. (1985) *Vygotsky and the Social Formation of the Mind*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

WERTSCH, J. (1987) 'Collective memory: Issues from a sociohistorical perspective', *The Quarterly Newsletter of the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition*, **9**, pp. 19–22.

WILSON, S. (1989) 'Cultural Conflict and Academic Achievement of Cree Indian Students: Perceptions of Schooling from Opasquia Ininiwuk', unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara.